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AMERICAN INDIANS

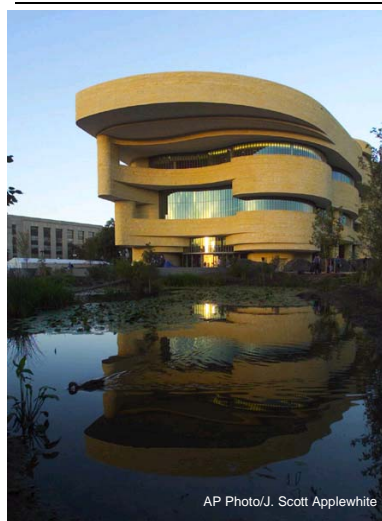
Today 4.3 million people are estimated to be at least in part American Indian or Alaska native. They make up 1.5 percent of the total U.S. population. However, according to Census 2000, as many as 7.9 million Americans (2.8% of the total population) claim American Indian ancestry.

The American Indian population in the U.S. today struggles with economic hardships and social problems, like poverty and substance abuse, but at the same time, an increasing number are becoming doctors, lawyers and businesspeople. Famous people with American Indian roots include Elvis Presley, Val Kilmer, Johnny Depp, Tiger Woods and Shania Twain.

The U.S. government supports American Indian political, civil, and cultural rights through many agencies. The main goals of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) are to support Indians' education, economic development, and resource (such as land) management. Many tribes have begun operating full-scale casinos, providing much needed revenue and employment.

On September 8, 2000, the BIA issued an apology to American Indians for the agency's "legacy of racism and inhumanity" and its participation in "ethnic cleansing." The head of the BIA, Kevin Gover, a Pawnee Indian, expressed sorrow and shame over the government's past efforts to eradicate Indian culture and deprive tribes of their land.

■ The new National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) opened on September 2004.



AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite

Dedicated to the preservation, study, and exhibition of the life, languages, literature, history and arts of the Native Peoples of the Western Hemisphere, the National Museum of the American Indian opened in Washington, DC, on September 21. A festive inaugural event attended by 20,000 American Indians for a joyous two-hour parade, and an official ceremony, drawing ten of thousands of observers, successfully kicked off the museum's opening.

The museum hosts one of world's finest and most comprehensive collections of Indian cultural materials: weavings, archaeological objects, textiles, basketry, painted hides and garments.



AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite



AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite

Two days after the opening, President Bush hosted a ceremony at the White House recognizing the new museum, . President

Bush emphasized that the American Indian experience is "central to the American story," and American Indian individuals and tribal governments "are strong and vital today."

The September 21 ceremony began with a colorful procession of native tribes; thousands of American Indians, many wearing native regalia, poured in to the museum's area to celebrate the opening of the first international institution of living cultures. Members of nearly 500 native nations from throughout the Americas walked or danced, accompanied by rhythmic drumming.



AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite

Sources: www.americanindian.si.edu & usinfo.state.gov

■ Indians from the Turtle Mountains

Today 3.1 million American Indians and Alaska natives claim membership in a specific tribe. Over half a million of them live on reservations or other trust lands.

There are approximately 275 Indian land areas in the U.S. administered as Indian reservations. On each reservation the local governing authority is the tribal government.

There are more than 550 federally recognized tribes in the United States. These tribes have a special, legal relationship with the U.S. government.

Indians are generally subject to federal, state, and local laws. On Indian reservations, however, only federal and tribal laws apply to members of the tribe unless Congress says otherwise. Any violation of state criminal law is, however, a federal offense on reservations. Most tribes now maintain tribal court systems.

This image comes from the website of the Indian Arts and Crafts Board: <http://www.doi.gov/iacb/>

It's probably best to imagine the life of American Indians on reservations today by taking a more detailed look at one of the tribes.

The homeland of the **Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians** is located in the Turtle Mountains in north central North Dakota. About 28,000 people live on the reservation covering an area of 72 square miles.



The reservation land is covered by low, rolling hills, trees, brush, farmland, lakes, ponds and sloughs. The winters are cold and it is not unusual for snow to

remain on the ground for up to six months.

The summers are mostly pleasant with warm days cooling down in the evenings.

Inhabitants find employment in enterprises operated by the tribe: Turtle Mountain Manufacturing, Uniband Data Processing, Turtle Mountain Chippewa Casino and in the government, health and education services as well as in the construction sector and in agricultural work.

Although the majority of people now belong to the Catholic faith, more and more are practicing traditional ceremonies, which are becoming part of marriages, graduations and funerals. There is a revived interest in tribal teachings. Elders who have preserved traditional customs, and who have maintained spiritual and cultural practices, are passing them on. Many young people are exploring their roots.

Many residents of the reservation travel throughout the United States and Canada participating in the annual Pow Wows. These celebrations include dancing, singing, feasting, praying, teaching, and learning.

The governing body of Turtle Mountain Chippewa consists of the elected chairperson and eight council members. Tribal elections are held every two years.

Texts on this page are based on Turtle Mountain Chippewa website (www.tmbci.net) and Infoplease.com

■ “The Sacred Legacy: Edward S. Curtis and the North American Indian”



During this past summer, the Madrid Museum of America hosted a photography exhibition entitled “The Sacred Legacy: Edward S. Curtis and the North American Indian”.

Edward Sheriff Curtis (1868-1952) was nicknamed *The Shadow Catcher* by Native Americans due to the photos he took of them. Beginning in 1900, over a period of 30 years, he took more than 40,000 images, and recorded rare ethnographic information on American Indian tribal groups ranging from Eskimo and Inuit

peoples of the far north to the Hopi people of the southwest.

Sources: www.curtis-collection.com & www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/database/curtis_e.html

Young girl at Powwow



Photo Courtesy of the Indian Health Service/ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

■ Cooking an Indian Treat

Indian Fry Bread

Ingredients:

3 cups flour, white or half whole wheat and white
1 1/3 cups warm water
1 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt

Preparation:

Mix flour, baking powder and salt.

Add warm water and knead until dough is soft but not sticky. Tear off a small piece, stretch and pat dough until thin, and poke a hole through the middle. Carefully drop into sizzling hot cooking oil. Brown on both sides. Remove from oil and drain on paper towels.

Serve while still warm. With jam, powdered sugar, cinnamon sugar, or honey, it is a sweet treat!

NOTE: 1 cup in American recipes = 227 grams of dry product or 235 milliliters of liquid product.

Find more American recipes in The Great American Potluck: <http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/immig/ckbk/index.html>

Image courtesy of iBAND.com



■ Indian Languages

There were about 300 original Native North American (including Canadian) languages. Many became extinct, replaced by European languages. As many as 100 languages might still be spoken, although some only by a few elderly tribe members. Navajo is the most widely spoken Indian language in the United States with about 175,000 speakers.

Still, hundreds of Indian words can be found in everyday American English. They include words for:

animals such as: **skunk, raccoon, moose;**
objects such as **canoe, toboggan, hammock;**
plants such as **potato, tobacco, maize;**
events such as **caucus.**

Few American Indian Nations developed writing systems, although some recorded their history by means of simple pictures drawn on skin or on wood. The most famous Indian writing system was developed by the Cherokees in the 19th century. In their system each symbol based on an English letter indicates a combination **consonant + vowel**.

Library of Congress



This is the header of *The Cherokee Phoenix* - the first Native American tribal newspaper to be published in North America.

■ American English

American Indian, Native American... How should you refer to this group of nations? According to *News Watch Diversity Style Guide* (San Francisco State University), when it is possible, national affiliation - such as **Navajo, Hopi, Cherokee** - should be used.

Native American, synonymous with **American Indian**, is sometimes a preferred term for indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere. Do not confuse this with the term **Indian American**, which refers to a U.S. permanent resident or citizen with ancestral ties to India.

When referring to American Indians in Alaska, it is acceptable to use for **Inupiat Eskimos** or **Yupik Eskimos**. Do not use these terms for **Aleuts** or **Inuits**.

Hawaiian and **Native Hawaiian** refers to a person having origins in any of the peoples of the Hawaiian Islands.

According to the National Museum of the American Indian, **American Indians** are also referred to as **Indigenous Peoples**.

<http://newswatch.sfsu.edu/>

The Navajo code talkers at work



The Navajo language played a crucial role for the U.S. Army fighting in the Pacific during World War II. The so-called **Navajo code talkers** transmitted secret messages by telephone and radio in their native unwritten language of extreme complexity - a code that the Japanese never broke.

When a Navajo code talker received a message, what he heard was a string of seemingly unrelated Navajo words. The code talker first had to translate each Navajo word into its English equivalent. Then he used only the first letter of the English equivalent in spelling an English word. For example, the Navajo words "wol-la-chee" (ant) and "be-la-sana" (apple) both stood for the letter "a."

About 400 Navajo code talkers served in the U.S. Army at that time.

Activity Page

Win a poster, a CD, and a bookmark!

To take part in a drawing for one American Indian related kit find the answer to the following question:

How many Native American tribes does the U.S. government recognize?

Send your answer to:
irc@embusa.es

Give your name, address and age. The deadline is November 12, 2004.

ZOOM

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About ZOOM

Zoom is online at
www.embusa.es/irc/zoom

Contact us at
irc@embusa.es

US Information Resource Centers

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C/ Serrano, 75
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08034 Barcelona

■ State Names

U.S. state names listed below come from Native American languages. Match the name and its origin:

Idaho	From the Chippewa word meicigama meaning great water
Alaska	From the Indian phrase E Dah Hoe meaning gem of the mountains
Arkansas	From the Chippewa word Ouisconsin meaning grassy place
Connecticut	From the Dakota Indian word Ayuhwa meaning sleepy ones
Iowa	After Cherokee Indian villages called Tanasi
Michigan	From the Aleutian word Alakshak meaning great lands or peninsula
Mississippi	From the Chippewa words mici zibi meaning great river
Oklahoma	From the Sioux word acansa meaning downstream place
Tennessee	From the Mohegan word Quinnehtukqut meaning Long River Place
Wisconsin	From the Choctaw words okla meaning people and humma meaning red

Source:
bensguide.gpo.gov

■ What Do We Know?

Use the construction "He is known/said/expected to..." and "It is known/said/expected/believed that..." as shown in the example:

- We know that Sitting Bull defeated Colonel Custer's soldiers at Little Big Horn River.
A. Sitting Bull is known to have defeated Colonel Custer's soldiers at Little Big Horn River.
B. It is known that Sitting Bull defeated Colonel Custer's soldiers at Little Big Horn River.
- They say Pocahontas saved the life of Captain John Smith.
A. _____
B. _____
- They believe that Tecumseh predicted the powerful earthquake in Missouri on Dec. 16, 1811.
A. _____
B. _____
- They expect Joanne Shenandoa, a successful Native American singer, to release a new album soon.
A. _____
B. _____

■ Glossary

- ancestry** - line of descent
chairperson - presiding officer of a meeting or an organization
dough - a mixture that consists of flour and liquid
eradicate - exterminate
extinct - no longer existing
hide - the skin of an animal
indigenous - having originated in and living in a particular region or environment
knead - press into a mass with hands
revenue - income produced by a given source
slough - a swamp or a place of deep mud
tribe - a social group comprising families, clans or generations